

PSYOP: Coordinating Worldwide Psychological Operations

Is There a National Requirement for a Strategic Psychological Operations Organization?

**A Monograph
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SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

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Title of Monograph: Strategic PSYOP: Coordinating Worldwide Psychological Operations - Is There a National Requirement for a Strategic Psychological Operations Organization?

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Accepted this 14th Day of April 2003

Report Documentation Page		Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.		
1. REPORT DATE 22 MAY 2003	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED -
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Strategic PSYOP: coordinating worldwide psychological operations - is there a national requirement for a strategic psychological operations organization?	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
	5b. GRANT NUMBER	
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Dave Acedvedo	5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
	5e. TASK NUMBER	
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) US Army School for Advanced Military Studies, 250 Gibbons Ave, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 66027	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER ATZL-SWV	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited		
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
14. ABSTRACT <p>Psychological Operations (PSYOP) is a cornerstone of the United States' Information Operations and is a combat multiplier. As defined by Joint Doctrine, Psychological Operations (PSYOP) are operations planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. A Strategic PSYOP organization is necessary to breach the gap between diplomatic and political statements and actions and those statements and actions by military organizations. To be effective, PSYOP must operate in, with and amongst the national leadership and governmental organizations. Current operations in the Global War on Terror focus on the need to coordinate, integrate and conduct Psychological Operations at the strategic level. Throughout the 20th century, PSYOP has been a strategic enabler, enabling military and civilian forces to focus their efforts. PSYOP's importance has increased and decreased throughout the latter part of the century. The galvanizing events of September 11, 2001 bought a new focus to PSYOP and strategic information coordination. A Strategic PSYOP Unit will provide the focal point to coordinate various governmental organizations and national leadership directives into a cohesive, integrated PSYOP program. The majority of PSYOP expertise resides within that Army; however, manning a strategic PSYOP organization must be a joint endeavor. This provides for full participation from the Services, incorporating their unique capabilities. A joint strategic PSYOP organization will take time to implement, as the required skills and experiences must be grown throughout the Services. Ultimately, a Joint Strategic Psychological Operations Unit will provide the coordination and knowledge support required to the interagency and national leadership.</p>		
15. SUBJECT TERMS		

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT 1	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 57	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Abstract

Strategic PSYOP: Coordinating Worldwide Psychological Operations Is There a National Requirement for a Strategic Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Organization? by LTC Dave Acevedo U.S. Army Reserve, 50 pages

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) is a cornerstone of the United States' Information Operations and is a combat multiplier. As defined by Joint Doctrine, Psychological Operations (PSYOP) are operations planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. A Strategic PSYOP organization is necessary to breach the gap between diplomatic and political statements and actions and those statements and actions by military organizations. To be effective, PSYOP must operate in, with and amongst the national leadership and governmental organizations. Current operations in the Global War on Terror focus on the need to coordinate, integrate and conduct Psychological Operations at the strategic level.

Throughout the 20th century, PSYOP has been a strategic enabler, enabling military and civilian forces to focus their efforts. PSYOP's importance has increased and decreased throughout the latter part of the century. The galvanizing events of September 11, 2001 brought a new focus to PSYOP and strategic information coordination. A Strategic PSYOP Unit will provide the focal point to coordinate various governmental organizations and national leadership directives into a cohesive, integrated PSYOP program.

The majority of PSYOP expertise resides within that Army; however, manning a strategic PSYOP organization must be a joint endeavor. This provides for full participation from the Services, incorporating their unique capabilities. A joint strategic PSYOP organization will take time to implement, as the required skills and experiences must be grown throughout the Services. Ultimately, a Joint Strategic Psychological Operations Unit will provide the coordination and knowledge support required to the interagency and national leadership.

Table of Contents	
Chapter One	1
Introduction	1
Psychological Operations – a definition and purpose	1
Strategic PSYOP – an unfunded requirement	2
Chapter Two	4
Psychological Operations in a Strategic Context	4
World War II – PSYOP as a Strategic Enabler	6
Korea – PSYOP becomes part of the Army Staff	7
PSYOP in Decline – the 1960s and 1970s	9
The Gulf War – PSYOP gains new importance	12
A Change in PSYOP Focus	14
Chapter Three	17
Current PSYOP Capabilities	17
PSYOP conducts Strategic Missions	17
PSYOP Principal Missions	18
Organization and Structure	19
PSYOP and Information Operations (IO)	22
PSYOP Forces allocation	24
Chapter Four	26
The Strategic PSYOP Unit	26
Functions of the SPU	26
Requirements for Success	28
Level of Effort	30
Strategic Shortfalls	32
Chapter Five	34
Proposed Strategic Psychological Operations Unit (SPU) Organization	34
SPU Proposed Mission and Purpose	34
Required Organizational Structure	35
The Strategic PSYOP Unit – The Basic Organization	38
Strategic PSYOP Unit – The Optimal Organization	40
Chapter Six	43
Recommendations and Conclusions	43
Strategic PSYOP – A Need Revalidated	43
Organized to meet a new Threat	44
Recommendation – A Joint Strategic PSYOP Organization	45
Appendix A –Psychological Strategy Board, 1951	46
Appendix B - PSYOP Exercise Participation FY 2002	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	49
Figure 2-1 American Revolutionary War Psychological Operations	5
Figure 3-1 Psychological Operations are found throughout the Spectrum of Conflict	16
Figure 3-2 Psychological Operations functional and Regional responsibilities	19
Figure 3-3 Psychological Operations - Organizations, Locations and Regional focus	24
Figure 4-1 Strategic Psychological Operations focus agency efforts to create a unified PSYOP Campaign plan for national leadership	27
Figure 4-2 Strategic PSYOP Level of Effort and Relevance	30
Figure 4-3 Comparison of Regional PSYOP Battalion to Strategic PSYOP Unit	32

Figure 5-1 PSYOP integration through all phases of conflict.....	35
Figure 5-2: Base Strategic PSYOP Unit.....	37
Figure 5-3 Joint Strategic Psychological Operations Unit.....	40

Chapter One

Introduction

“The supreme excellence is not to win a hundred victories in a hundred battles. The supreme excellence is to subdue the armies of your enemies without even having to fight them.”

Sun Tzu

Psychological Operations – a definition and purpose

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) is a cornerstone of the United States’ Information Operations and is a combat multiplier. PSYOP can be employed in the full spectrum of military operations: peacetime, pre-hostilities, during conflict, and post hostilities. Effective use of PSYOP can lead to improved relations with nations and can deter the actions of adversaries against the United States and its allies. In the event of hostilities, effective employment of PSYOP can reduce U.S. casualties; upon conclusion of combat operations, PSYOP is instrumental in supporting post conflict operations. A properly planned, coordinated, resourced and implemented PSYOP campaign is an extension of the diplomatic element of national power. The PSYOP campaign will reassure allies, dissuade adversaries, deter further aggression, and show U.S. intentions in a more favorable light.

As defined by Joint Doctrine, Psychological Operations (PSYOP) are operations planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.¹ Joint Doctrine also describes four distinct categories of Military Psychological Operations. They are: Strategic PSYOP, Operational PSYOP, Tactical PSYOP

¹Department of Defense, JP 3-53 *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), I-1

and Consolidated PSYOP. This monograph will focus on the Strategic PSYOP and therefore provides the Joint Doctrine definition of Strategic PSYOP:

International information activities conducted by U.S. Government agencies to influence foreign attitudes, perceptions, and behavior in favor of U.S. goals and objectives. These programs are conducted predominantly outside the military arena but can utilize Department of Defense assets and be supported by military PSYOP. Military PSYOP with potential strategic impact must be coordinated with national efforts.²

Strategic PSYOP – an unfunded requirement

A review of current literature indicates that a Strategic PSYOP organization is necessary to breach the gap between diplomatic and political statements and actions and those statements and actions by military organizations. As seen in the previous section, its very definition invokes PSYOP to operate in, with and amongst the national leadership to make effective use of PSYOP. PSYOP main task is to “influence...foreign governments [and] organizations”. PSYOP conducted against a target audience such as this must of necessity be conducted and coordinated at the strategic level. The final statement in the Strategic PSYOP mission is a critical component in establishing a Strategic PSYOP capability. PSYOP forces routinely and intimately collaborate with governmental and non-governmental agencies, host nation governments and agencies in order to accomplish their assigned mission. Joint Publication 3-53 reinforces the requirement for strategic PSYOP:

Peacetime U.S. military PSYOP require USG interagency coordination and integration at the national level to be fully effective. When the Armed Forces of the United States are integrated into a multinational command structure, peacetime PSYOP policies and wartime conduct should be coordinated and integrated to the maximum extent possible for the attainment of U.S. and multinational security objectives.³

²Ibid, I-2

³Ibid

A cursory review of Joint doctrine clearly spells out the requirement to conduct and coordinate Psychological Operations at the strategic level. As the Global Information Environment continues to gain in complexity, sophistication and importance, Strategic PSYOP becomes a more central and critical component of United States' operations throughout the world.

Numerous studies conducted by military, quasi-military and civilian organizations have stated the need to extend Psychological Operations into the strategic arena. These organizations have conducted in-depth reviews of the organization, mission and purpose of the PSYOP force. Their studies have all identified the lack of a Strategic PSYOP capability as a major shortfall in PSYOP capabilities.⁴

The significance of a Strategic PSYOP Unit (SPU) gains greater weight as information becomes both a weapon against adversaries and a shield against adversary's PSYOP or Information Operations (IO). The Department of Defense has recognized the importance of PSYOP in conducting influence operations and has tasked Special Operations Command to "Support Combatant Commands and interagency coordination of strategic influence operations by training, maintaining and equipping PSYOP and other special operations force IO capabilities to meet the changing environment."⁵

Current operations on the Global War on Terror (GWOT) focus on the need to coordinate, integrate and conduct Psychological Operations at the strategic level. The impact of a transnational adversary which sees or accepts no national boundaries and recognizes no limits on

⁴Prior studies include numerous unclassified sources - *PSYOP Master Plan 1985*; *PSYOP Master Plan 1990*; *Special Warfare Center: PSYOP into the 21st Century*; *Presidential Decision Directive 68 (1999)*; *USSOCOM PSYOP Joint Critical Requirements Document 2000*; *Defense Science Board Task Force PSYOP Study 2000*; *Defense Science Board Dissemination Study 2001*; *USASOC PSYOP into the 21st Century 2000*; *USSOCOM Joint PSYOP Vision 2001* and *USSOCOM Joint Operational Concept 2001*. These unclassified documents all have noted that the lack of a Strategic PSYOP capability is the "Achilles' Heel" of Psychological Operations.

⁵Department of Defense, DOD Directive 3600.1 Information Operations (Draft – Rev 6, June 2002), 2-1.

its targets, either military or civilian, brings rise to a new type of PSYOP – one in which the skills and abilities of Psychological Operations experts are employed at the highest levels of government. Strategic PSYOP will effect coordination and planning for not only the Global War on Terror, but also in other actions in which the President or the Secretary of Defense deems appropriate.

This monograph will seek to determine the veracity of the requirement for a Strategic Psychological Operations Unit, provide an overview of the current capabilities of the PSYOP force, and recommend whether or not a SPU is a viable organization. This paper will address PSYOP in its current context, strategic PSYOP conducted in past conflicts, and provide a recommendation for a strategic organization as may be borne out in the research. The information contained herein is restricted to the unclassified level. All information presented within is accessible to the general public. As such, some capabilities, which PSYOP forces may or may not have, will not be presented.

Chapter Two

Psychological Operations in a Strategic Context

Psychological Operations have been an integral part in American conflicts since the founding of the nation. During the American Revolution, leaflets were scattered to British soldiers in Massachusetts contrasting the life they led with those of their officers. The following is an example of text printed on a Revolutionary era PSYOP leaflet:

Desertion Leaflet from Bunker Hill	
<p>Prospect Hill [Where the British officers were quartered]</p> <p>Seven Dollars a month Fresh Provisions, and in Plenty Health Freedom, Ease, Affluence and a good Farm</p>	<p>Bunker Hill</p> <p>Three Pence a Day Rotten Salt Pork The Scurvy Slavery, Beggary and Want</p>

Figure 2-1: American Revolutionary War Psychological Operations⁶

"Artful use was made of the sharp class distinctions then existing between British officers and enlisted men; fear was exploited as an aid to persuasion; the language was pointed."⁷ In terms of strategic PSYOP, American Revolutionaries found an exploitable target in King George III. American propagandists could attack the king and many members of his Cabinet as "boors, fuddy-duddies, too-little-and-too-laters, and conspicuous nincompoops."⁸ United States' Strategic PSYOP, even in a rudimentary form, was born in our American Revolution. It combined both tactical and strategic targets in order to achieve the demoralization of not only ground forces, but also those agencies, i.e., political leadership, which employed and directed the ground forces.

Throughout American history, PSYOP has played a role, either large or small. This paper will focus on three operations or conflicts in which PSYOP has been elevated to the Strategic role.

⁶Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (Washington, DC, Combat Forces Press, 1954), 54

⁷Ibid

⁸Ibid, 157

World War II – PSYOP as a Strategic Enabler

"In this war, which was total in every sense of the word, we have seen many great changes in military science. It seems to me that not the least of these was the development of psychological warfare as a specific and effective weapon."

General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower

During World War II (WWII), PSYOP was an essential element in the conduct of operational and strategic campaigns. In the European Theater of War (ETO), Psychological Warfare (as PSYOP was known then) was not only a joint operation in conjunction with the British, but also a "joint military – civilian operation, with civilian personnel of various civilian agencies employed at all echelons."⁹ Brigadier General Robert A. McClure (who had a prominent role in the development of PSYOP and Special Forces in WWII and Korea) correctly surmised in his report that "the nature of psychological warfare is political as well as military, and many decisions and directives could only be obtained through agencies representing the State Department of the United States or the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom."¹⁰ PSYOP in WWII assumed a strategic posture, coordinating activities that focused not on the tactical or operational level, but on the overarching strategy in the conduct of operations in the ETO. (As a matter of record, PSYOP forces were not assigned below Army level, except in unique instances, then only for liaison roles, and for a short duration of time.) Participation at the strategic level of war included numerous governmental agencies from both the United States and the United Kingdom. These included The Office of War Information (USA), Office of Strategic Services (USA), the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office (UK), British Broadcasting

⁹U.S. Army Military History Institute, *Report of the General Board, United States Forces, European Theater, Psychological Warfare in the European Theater of Operations, Psychological Warfare Section study Number 131*, undated, 2

¹⁰Ibid

Corporation (UK) and the Political Warfare Executive of the Foreign Office (UK).¹¹ Psychological Warfare operations in the ETO were conducted at the highest levels of government, coordinated through Department of War and Department of State (for the United States) and through the Foreign Office (for the United Kingdom).

The impact of PSYOP in a strategic role was also felt in Washington, DC, during the early stages of WWII. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's plan to arm the oppressed in conquered nations both in the European and in Pacific Theaters came to the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee. The committee studied the President's directive and provided recommendations for arms that could be smuggled into the occupied countries and surreptitiously issued to the partisan forces (or "Quislings " as they were known then).¹² Psychological Operations, working in a strategic capacity with allies, government agencies (both U.S. and Allied) provided the strategic link between government policy and direction, and execution at the theater and Army level.

Korea – PSYOP becomes part of the Army Staff

"Modern war has become a struggle for men's minds as well as for their bodies"

Brigadier General Robert McClure, Chief of Psychological Warfare, Korean War

The invasion of South Korea in 1950 provided Brigadier General Robert McClure, former psychological warfare chief for the European Theater of Operations, the opportunity to show that Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) and unconventional warfare actions could be applied to war scenarios as stand alone operations. McClure vigorously pressed for the establishment of a separate psychological-warfare staff reporting directly to the Army Chief of

¹¹Ibid, pg 3

¹²Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Memo to General Smith from Psychological Warfare Section, <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/psf/box6/folo71.html> (12 February 2002)

Staff, all the while keeping quiet about his plans to develop an unconventional-warfare element within the proposed headquarters until it was too late for any traditionally minded officers to mount an opposition.

With strong support from Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, Jr., who believed Korea offered an “especial opportunity for highly profitable exploitation” of psychological warfare, and advocated “quality rather than quantity” in producing leaflets and radio broadcasts, McClure’s proposal was adopted in September 1950.¹³ To no one’s surprise, McClure became the head of the new organization, which became the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, or OCPW. With Ranger companies’ deactivation in 1951, McClure secured many of the 2,300 manpower slots and had many of these assigned to his newly created empire at Fort Bragg, North Carolina: the Psychological Warfare Center and its Special Forces School.¹⁴

The Korean War stimulated improvements in U.S. overt capabilities as well. In 1950, President Truman created a Psychological Strategy Board in the White House to provide a high-level focus for government-wide activities in this area. The board’s charter was “for the formulation and promulgation...of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort.”¹⁵ (Appendix A contains the text of the Presidential statement) The State Department established a new International Information Administration; the Psychological Warfare Center’s psychological operations gave new life to military PSYOP; and a Psychological Operations Coordinating

¹³United States of America Korean War Commemoration Webpage
<http://korea50.army.mil/history/factsheets/psychowar.shtml> (12 February 2003)

¹⁴American Heritage, November/December 2002, Volume 53, Number 6
www.americanheritage.com/AMHER/2002/06/spec_forces.shtml (3 March 2003)

¹⁵Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum,
<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/psf/box6/folo71.html> (18 February 2002)

Committee attempted to provide operational coordination among the various involved agencies¹⁶. At the inception of the Cold War, the U.S. Administration saw PSYOP not only as a viable tactical and operational tool, but as also a key component of national strategy. Brigadier General McClure's foresight in developing an Office of Chief, Psychological Warfare in the Army Staff provided the national leadership the focus on PSYOP that became a pillar of political warfare during the beginnings of the Cold War.

PSYOP in Decline – the 1960s and 1970s

“Better get PSYWAR on it...”

Colonel Mike Kirby, as portrayed by John Wayne in *The Green Berets*

Despite McClure's efforts to establish a strong PSYOP organization within the Army Staff and throughout the force, PSYOP fell into a period of decline in the early 1960's, a decline that lasted through the early 1980s. This was due to numerous factors that shifted emphasis from strategic PSYOP and PSYOP in general. Despite the impetus provided by the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations regarding PSYOP, other, more action-oriented, activities took the limelight. As mentioned previously, the Psychological Warfare School at Fort Bragg was established with the focus of Psychological Warfare and Unconventional Operations (UW). With the advent of Vietnam, the Kennedy administration took an interest in the UW aspect of the school, refocusing its priorities and making Special Forces the main effort. This relegated PSYOP to a secondary effort, resulting in under-resourcing of PSYOP. Despite the second tier status, PSYOP still served exceptionally well in the field, aiding tactical commanders with PSYOP programs and striving to “win the hearts and minds” of the Vietnamese. However, on a strategic level, PSYOP remained in the hands of the national leadership and civilian advisors. Coordination of tactical and

¹⁶Frank R. Barnett and Carnes Lord, eds, *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations, Rethinking the US Approach* (Washington, DC National Defense University Press in cooperation with National Strategy Information Center, Inc, 1989), 16

operational PSYOP did not occur other than on a “by exception” basis. One notable exception was the "Chieu Hoi" (Open Arms) program conducted in coordination with the Central Intelligence Agency. During the first six months of 1966, PSYOP forces created and the Air Force dropped more than 508 million leaflets. The leaflets urged the Viet Cong to surrender to Government forces, promising them good treatment and eventual repatriation to their families. Over 200,000 Viet Cong were reported to have surrendered through this program.

The Johnson and Nixon Administrations employed Strategic PSYOP as part of an escalation program in Vietnam. After having already made what it considered its maximum feasible concessions in the Vietnam peace talks, the United States resorted to escalation or threatened escalation to bring the negotiations to closure. Unable to bring the North Vietnamese to the bargaining table, the United States conducted air attacks against military and military-related strategic targets. While the purpose was to destroy military forces and facilities, the bombing also had a psychological effect. The principal psychological objective of these attacks was to persuade enemy leaders to negotiate an early end to the conflicts on terms acceptable to the United States.¹⁷ Washington employed massive B-52 and fighter-bomber strikes on Hanoi and Haiphong to force the communists to complete a peace agreement, the key provisions of which they had already accepted. Strategic PSYOP emanating directly from the Oval Office provided questionable effect, as the North Vietnamese were able to withstand the pressure inflicted by the bombings. The communists agreed to terms only after their military forces on the battlefield had been stalemated. Prior to the settlements, the communist forces in Vietnam had mounted major offensives, the defeat of which left them no prospects for immediate further military gains.

¹⁷Steven T. Hosmer, *Psychological Effects of U.S. Air Operations in Four Wars* (Santa Monica, Ca., RAND Corporation, 1996), 3

The end of the Vietnam War brought enormous, wrenching changes to the Army. PSYOP was not impervious to these changes. The PSYOP community did not capitalize on the lessons learned during the war, and PSYOP remained focused at the tactical level. While PSYOP representation remained at the Joint Staff, they were not focused on PSYOP's strategic issues, but rather on the survival of the PSYOP field and upcoming changes based on the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

During this period, PSYOP underwent numerous organizational and personnel management changes. The latter created a separate career field for PSYOP enlisted and officer personnel, requiring reorganization of the force and career management. Previously, PSYOP enlisted soldiers came from the Military Intelligence field while PSYOP Officers came from the Foreign Area Officer career field. The Officer Corps personnel system created a new Functional Area for PSYOP officers and aligned it with Special Forces. The changes to both the enlisted and officer career field resulted in the loss of qualified soldiers who decided to remain in their original career field. Changes in the force structure were finalized, creating the structure of the 4th PSYOP Group and the two Reserve PSYOP Groups (2nd and 7th), which essentially still exists today.

PSYOP forces were tactically successful during the Vietnam period. They supported the field commanders by creating innovative products aimed at the morale of the North Vietnamese soldier. The most effective of the 4th PSYOP Group's leaflets were those photocopies of the actual "self criticism" diaries of defected or killed VC cadre, outlining their occasional "impure thoughts," but more to the point, their wartime misery and home-sickness. The leaflets were then

dropped over their comrades' units. Army PSYOP also documented the terrible VC cadre losses to Allied firepower during the 1968 Tet Offensive.¹⁸

However, PSYOP's focus on the lower level of war, its exclusion from the strategic / national level of planning and the resultant organizational and personnel changes brought PSYOP to near obsolescence at anything beyond the tactical level. This decline was slowed and finally arrested in 1985 with the adoption of the Department of Defense Psychological Operations Master Plan, which dictated changes to PSYOP, its force structure, education and mission. This plan has subsequently been updated (Department of Defense Psychological Operations Master Plan 1990) and incorporated into the latest United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Joint Psychological Vision and USSOCOM Joint Psychological Operations Operational Concept.¹⁹

The Gulf War – PSYOP gains new importance

"If we do go to war, psychological operations are going to be absolutely a critical, critical part of any campaign that we must get involved in."

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf III, Operations Desert Shield - 1990

PSYOP began its climb from strategic and operational irrelevance in the mid 1980s. The adoption of the PSYOP Master Plan, especially the revisions in the 1990 version, initiated the reversal of PSYOP's decline. The creation of USSOCOM in 1987 as the functional command of all Special Operations and Executive Agent for PSYOP provided a single agency responsibility and strategic direction to improve PSYOP capabilities. Through Presidential Directives, military

¹⁸Stanley Sandler, "Army Psywarriors A History of U.S. Army Psychological Operations, Part II - Vietnam to Kuwait," *Mindbenders* Vol. 9, No. 3 - Fall 1995, 47

¹⁹The soundness of the Department of Defense *Psychological Operations Master Plan 1990*, dated 11 Feb 1990, remains valid as the requirements stated within this document remain and have been incorporated into current PSYOP plans to include the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) *Joint Psychological Vision*, July, 2002; USSOCOM *Joint Psychological Operations Operational Concept*, July 2002.

PSYOP have become well institutionalized within DOD. The 1983 National Security Directive (NSDD) 77 (“Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security”), the 1984 National Security Decision 130 (“U.S. International Information Policy”) all required increased interagency coordination with PSYOP, bringing it closer to the strategic level as a coordinating element of national information policy.

However, the onset of hostilities in the Gulf region when Iraq invaded Kuwait was a major watershed for PSYOP, both on the strategic and operational level. PSYOP forces were employed to prepare PSYOP Campaign Plans at the operational level of war. A cell of twelve PSYOP specialists, a representative from European Command (EUCOM), and a liaison team from the 193rd Special Operations Wing (Pennsylvania Air National Guard) assembled at MacDill Air Force Base on 11 August 1990 to initiate planning for Gulf operations.²⁰ However, this planning group faced resistance from DOD and other government agencies. The issue focused on the charter for a theater organization to propose strategic objectives for the interagency and DOD. The stalemate was finally broken due to the request of Coalition partners to develop a strategic plan to encourage the Iraqis to surrender.²¹

PSYOP succeeded at the tactical and operational level, creating products and programs that created dissension within the Iraqi forces, reducing morale, and encouraging surrender on a great scale. Additionally, the Gulf War brought a completely new meaning to the use of multimedia in psychological operations. Radio and TV broadcasts, leaflets, and loudspeakers used the themes of Arab brotherhood, allied air power, and Iraqi isolation. Over a seven-week period, 29 million leaflets in at least 14 varieties were dropped behind Iraqi lines, reaching

²⁰Kathy J. Perry, *The use of Psychological Operations as a Strategic Tool*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 5

²¹COL Jeffrey B. Jones and MAJ Jack Summe, *Psychological Operations in Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Urban Freedom*, AUSA Landpower Essay Series, No 97-2, August 1997, 28

approximately 98 percent of the 300,000 troops. PSYOP forces provided the operational and tactical commanders the means to communicate with the enemy and foreign population; it regained some of the relevancy lost during the 1960s.

Regarding Strategic PSYOP, the force made inroads, however was still hamstrung by a lack of representation, under manning and support. The planning group tasked to create the PSYOP Campaign Plan faced resistance from DOD and interagency. While coming to the forefront during the Gulf War and making inroads into the strategic arena, PSYOP still had not yet been accepted into the inner circle of strategic planning within the U.S. government. This pattern has remained in place for nearly eleven years, where PSYOP is a key component at the tactical and operational level, however an underutilized and underappreciated resource at the strategic level.

A Change in PSYOP Focus

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) has changed the focus of PSYOP. By its doctrine, Army PSYOP focuses its efforts at the tactical and operational level. This is evidenced in a force structure consisting of Tactical PSYOP Teams (TPT), leaflet printing facilities, Aerial Loudspeaker (ALS) systems, 10- and 50- Kw radio and television broadcast transmitters, and other tactical oriented systems.²² However, in light of the new environment thrust upon the United States since September 11, 2001, representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff have identified a requirement for a Strategic PSYOP capability. The National Military Strategy (NMS) calls for the “full integration of the national instruments of

²²Department of Defense *Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-05.30, Psychological Operations* (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, 2000), 1-2.

power” to include “exploiting the power of information”²³ to meet the demands of the GWOT. The NMS tasks the Services to conduct Joint Force operations, a major tenet of which is integrated operations. This seeks to maximize the capabilities inherent in the armed forces by employing them in concert with other governmental and non-governmental agencies.²⁴

The Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 04 – 09 directs United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), in its capacity as Executive Agent for Psychological Operations, to develop recommendations for the creation of a Strategic PSYOP force.²⁵ This is in keeping with recommendations from various task forces, which have studied PSYOP employment, doctrine, organizational issues, and media trends. The Defense Science Board, in May 2000, recommended

that DOD create a military PSYOP planning staff under the competent authority of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (OASD (SO/LIC)), to ensure the integration of operational- and tactical- level PSYOP with strategic perception management initiatives and to provide planning support for strategic planning activities.²⁶

The need for a strategic force to coordinate PSYOP with the U.S. government, the interagency and coordinate the overall conduct of PSYOP worldwide is evident through the review of history, military operations, doctrine and independent studies presented thus far. Doctrine at the Joint and Army level all indicate a need for and direct a requirement to conduct PSYOP at the national level. Independent studies have reviewed the current organization and requirements for

²³Department of Defense, *National Military Strategy, Pre-Decisional Draft*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), i, ii

²⁴Ibid, pg. 21

²⁵United States Special Operations Command, “*Strategic PSYOP Unit Capabilities*” (presented at the annual World Wide PSYOP Conference, Raleigh-Durham, NC, 19 22 November, 2002), USSOCOM, SOIO.

²⁶Defense Science Board, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on The Creation and Dissemination of all forms of Information in Support of Psychological Operations (PSYOP) in time of Military Conflict*, (Washington D.C., Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, 2000), 52.

PSYOP and made recommendations for a Strategic PSYOP organization. In the 1990 PSYOP Master Plan, the Office of the Secretary of Defense noted the need for the organization and made provisions to establish a Joint Psychological Operations Center (JPOC) in the National Capital Region (NCR). The historical studies presented exemplify the importance of an integrated PSYOP organization and process working in concert with national leadership and combatant commanders. Instances in which an overarching organization was not included in planning and execution have resulted in less effective, unfocused PSYOP. PSYOP conducted solely at the tactical and operational level provided commanders the necessary support to conduct combat operations; however, a lack of coordination at the national level resulted in delays in executing a PSYOP plan between Coalition partners, which presents an uncoordinated message between national leadership and field forces. The remainder of this monograph will focus on PSYOP force capabilities, organization and a recommendation for a strategic PSYOP organization.

Chapter Three

Current PSYOP Capabilities

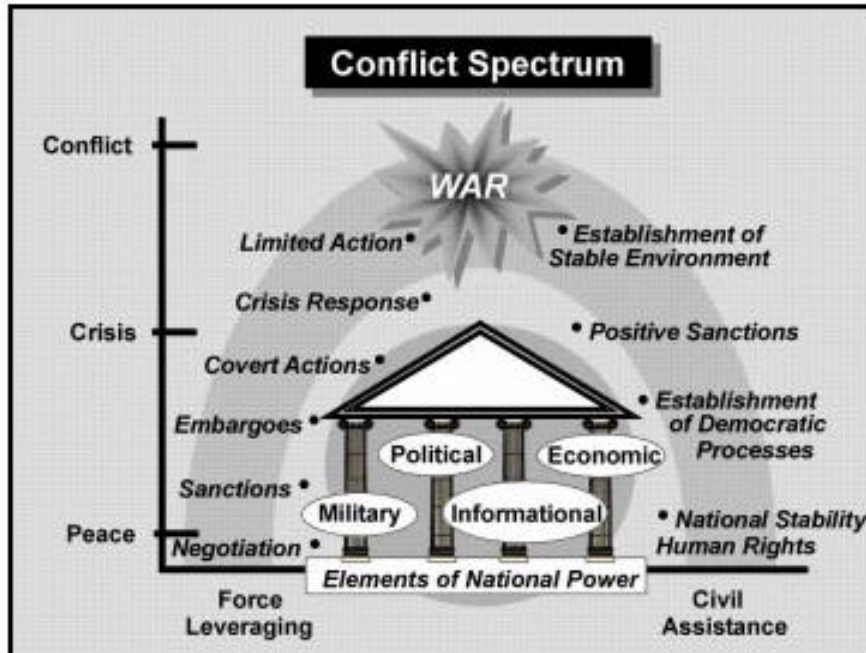


Figure 3-1 Psychological Operations are found throughout the Conflict Spectrum²⁷

PSYOP conducts Strategic Missions

Complex issues, relations between nation-states, and unavoidable conflict due to resource scarcity place U.S. forces on the spectrum of conflict at all times. As depicted in Figure 3-1, the spectrum ranges from peace to crisis to war and back again. In all levels and aspects of conflict, PSYOP is called upon to be the voice of the commander to foreign audiences. PSYOP conducts missions of national interest, ranging from counter drug operations (at the lower or “peace” spectrum, but concurrently at the far right, or “civil assistance” aspect), to Humanitarian Demining Operations to Joint – Combined Exercise Exchanges (JCETs) with allied nations. While not defined as “crisis” or “war”, these operations are critical to the success of United States foreign policy, provide friendly and potential adversary nations an insight into our intent or

²⁷FM 3-05.30 *Psychological Operations*, 1-2.

desires for the world, and solidify or create military contacts and familiarity with a region. These missions, on which ride the national interests of the United States, are strategic in nature. As such, they must be coordinated through a strategic organization with the purpose of advancing the goals of the United States, not necessarily those of a regional combatant commander.

Psychological Operations support the full spectrum of military operations. This spectrum often predates the use of force, where PSYOP, along with other Information Operations and military activities, operates to influence the adversary. In this manner, PSYOP strives to preclude or limit the use of direct military power through its influencing message. In crisis and conflict, when military combat forces have been introduced, PSYOP supports the commander in conducting his mission while concurrently supporting the elements of national power.

PSYOP Principal Missions

Psychological Operations principal missions include the following:

- Influencing foreign populations by expressing information subjectively to influence attitudes and behavior, and to obtain compliance or noninterference. This type of information can facilitate military operations, minimize needless loss of life and collateral damage, and further the objectives of the United States and its allies. PSYOP personnel can also assist the commander as they apply influence by advising him of “who and how to influence” to achieve his mission.
- Advising the supported commander through the targeting process, regarding Psychological Actions (PSYACTs), PSYOP enabling actions, and targeting restrictions to be executed by the military force. These actions and restrictions facilitate mission accomplishment, minimize adverse impacts, and attack the enemy’s will to continue.

They may also have political, cultural, ethnic, religious, historical, geographic, economic, military, ideological, regional, national, or demographic origins.

- Providing public information to foreign populations to support humanitarian activities, ease suffering, and restore or maintain civil order.
- Serving as the supported military commander's voice to foreign populations to convey intent.
- Countering enemy propaganda, misinformation, and opposing information to correctly portray friendly intent and actions, while denying others the ability to polarize public opinion and political will against the U.S. and its allies within an area of operations.

PSYOP personnel also can serve as a focal point to fuse all capabilities or enablers of United States Government (USG) departments and agencies for the supported commander to achieve this end.²⁸

PSYOP missions from the tactical through the operational level have strategic implications. As PSYOP forces operate in either a humanitarian, peace enforcement or combat mission, they carry the voice of the nation's leadership in conveying a message to the foreign audience. As such, there is a growing and necessary demand for coordinating national messages, themes and statements with PSYOP actions.

Organization and Structure

The total Army PSYOP force provides strategic, operational, and tactical support to the geographic CINCs.²⁹ PSYOP forces are capable of supporting tactical and operational level missions with their current organization. PSYOP forces have been task organized to support

²⁸*FM 3-05.30 Psychological Operations*, 1-2.

²⁹Department of Defense *Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-25, Special Forces Operations* (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, 1999), 3-1.

strategic operations. However, these latter organizations have been ad hoc, short lived nor inculcated into the planning requirements of the national leadership. Support to the strategic realm requires a recognized, resourced, and staffed Strategic Psychological Operations Unit (SPU) – the capabilities must be clearly identified and available for employment.

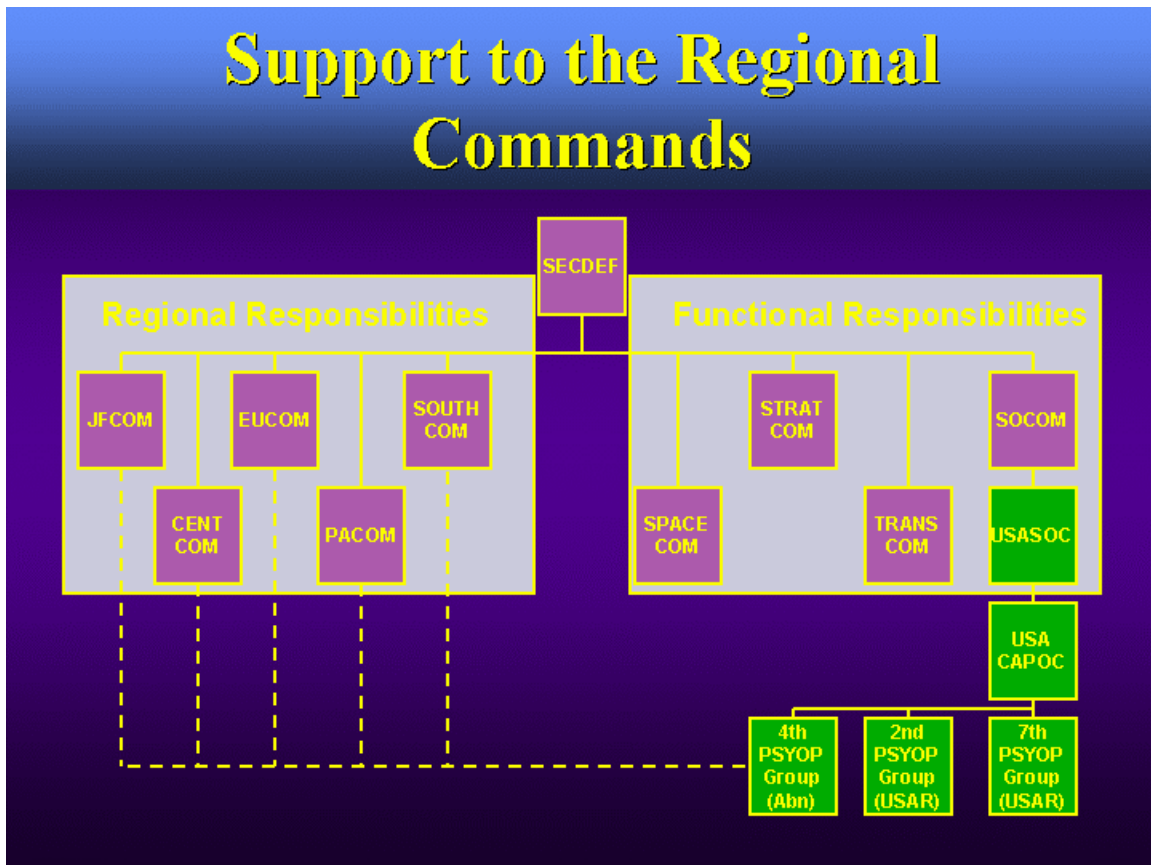


Figure 3-2 – Psychological Operations functional and Regional responsibilities³⁰

Army Psychological Operations forces are comprised of one Active Psychological Operations Group (POG) – the 4th POG based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and two Reserve Forces POGs – the 2nd POG based in Ohio, and the 7th POG based in California. As depicted in Figure 3-2, the PSYOP Groups have both a functional and regional responsibility. During

³⁰ “4th Psychological Operations Group 2002 Command Briefing,” Capabilities of Army Psychological Operations, 4th Psychological Operations Group, Ft. Bragg, NC.

peacetime operations, they are responsible to United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) for administration, training and logistical support. The United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC), also based at Fort Bragg, serves as the intermediate headquarters for PSYOP forces. USACAPOC provides forces to the combatant commanders as well as training and administration for its assigned forces. During contingencies and operations, the Groups and their subordinate battalions operate under the command and control of the regional combatant commander, providing direct PSYOP support. The element missing in the chart is that of an overarching organization to coordinate / plan and support national themes and messages as may be directed by the President or Secretary of Defense. Currently, there is no organization at national or DOD level charged with the responsibility to coordinate or oversee Strategic PSYOP.

Required augmentation for a Strategic PSYOP planning capability is drawn from those varied resources and melded into an ad hoc organization to support planning requirements. Such an organization does not have the basis or mandate for long range strategic planning; it simply meets the requirements for the immediate need. Strategic PSYOP support should not be left to the vagaries of the duty roster, deployment availability, or the immediacy of the mission. A standing SPU will provide a continuous, well-versed and prepared capability to support national leadership with trained individuals who are familiar with the planning, coordinating and deconflicting Strategic PSYOP.

The growing requirement to conduct Strategic Information dissemination operations demands an organization to coordinate and work with other USG agencies. During operations to move Afghanistan detainees to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, a strong, unified message was necessary to ensure that the International Community, the U.S. public, and our adversaries knew the purpose and intent of this operation. Agencies from across the spectrum of the U.S. national government

collaborated to provide the required message and disseminate them to the appropriate audiences. These agencies include the Department of State (DOS), DOD, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and U.S. diplomatic posts. In this particular issue, these agencies had to coordinate and perform strategic missions with Coalition partners, Allies, the United Nations (UN), international organizations (IOs), or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This is an example of how strategic information must be coordinated through numerous agencies and, as necessary, allies, to ensure the correct message and intent is disseminated to the target audience(s).³¹

PSYOP and Information Operations (IO)

The Department of Defense (DOD) has taken concrete steps to ensure that PSYOP and IO are coordinated in their operations. Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 3600-1 explicitly explains its policy:

In peacetime, IO supports national objectives primarily by influencing foreign perceptions and decision-making. In crises short of hostilities, IO can be used as a flexible deterrent option to communicate national interest and demonstrate resolve. In conflict, IO can be applied to achieve physical and psychological results in support of military operations.³²

In a further definition of cooperation and coordination between IO and PSYOP, DODD 3600-1 draws an unbreakable link: “ Core capabilities [are] capabilities employed by DOD Components to influence adversary decision-makers or groups while protecting friendly decision-

³¹Author’s personal observation while participating as a member of the Information Operations Task Force (IOTF) from March 8 through April 18, 2002. The IOTF coordinated between the combatant commands and with the interagency to provide a coordinated front in the information arena.

³²Department of Defense, DOD Directive 3600.1 Information Operations (Draft – Rev 6, June 2002), 2.

making. These capabilities include Psychological Operations (PSYOP), military deception, Operations Security (OPSEC)”³³

PSYOP, working with IO, will play a crucial role in gaining and maintaining information superiority. PSYOP forces will focus their efforts on perception management to deter and dissuade or set the conditions for a wide array of operations. PSYOP, along with IO, contributes to the integration of the military element of national power with all elements of national power to diffuse crises, reduce confrontation, and forestalling or eliminating the need to employ combat forces.³⁴ The immediacy of news reporting and dissemination of information, intent, and purposes of friendly and antagonistic governments does not favor a reactive military response. U.S. forces operating in both friendly and unfriendly territory must be able to understand, explain and expand upon the political messages our national leaders pronounce. A strategic organization which can recommend target audiences (populations to which the message is directed); content (the idea the national leadership desires to send); media (i.e., print, television, radio, etc.); modes of dissemination; and provide military context to messages will act as a unifying agency between the highest level of policy makers and the PSYOP soldier on the ground. The SPU must be capable of planning, leveraging and coordinating effective strategic information activities, ranging from precision information engagement to foreign media operations, across the full spectrum of conflict, and at all levels of an operation.³⁵ Agencies and organizations at the national level show a glaring lack of strategic coordination between PSYOP and other IO functions. Organizations formed to respond to strategic information requirements, such as those

³³Ibid

³⁴*Field Manual 100-25, Special Forces Operations*, 3-1.

³⁵United States Special Operations Command, “*Strategic PSYOP Unit Capabilities*” (presented at the annual World Wide PSYOP Conference, Raleigh-Durham, NC, 19 22 November, 2002), USSOCOM, SOIO.

formed upon the United States' invasion of Afghanistan, were reactionary, lacking in PSYOP representation, and ad hoc. The Information Operations Task Force, formed to manage the Information aspects of the GWOT, conducted coordination functions across the Combatant Commanders areas of responsibility. However, they lacked the in-house expertise and manpower to fully exploit IO opportunities.³⁶ The necessary skills such as media analysis experts, research and survey analysts, and polling experts were not resident in the military. With the newness of the requirement for strategic information coordination, the IOTF was unable to maintain a cohesive and unified information front across the globe.

PSYOP Forces allocation

PSYOP forces are allocated on the basis of one active duty battalion per regional combatant commander. Each PSYOP battalion is regionally oriented, with language skills and training focus aligned to their specific theater. Two additional battalions provide the tactical forces (9th Psychological Operations Battalion (POB)) and dissemination assets (3rd POB) to conduct PSYOP within a region. The focus of these battalions is to the combatant commander's area of operations. The specific locations, area orientation, and missions are depicted in Figure 3-3. Active Component battalions provide regional expertise in the theater while the Reserve battalions provide both tactical and regional support.

The regional battalion plans and conducts PSYOP in support of the combatant commanders.³⁷ While national priorities are provided to the PSYOP forces in theater, coordination between military and civilian, governmental or other agencies that affect the

³⁶ Author's personal observation while participating as a member of the IOTF, March 8 – April 18, 2002. A private organization, The Rendon Group, was contracted to provide personnel, analysis support, technology and policy recommendations on IO to the IOTF and members of the Joint Staff.

³⁷ FM 3-05.30 *Psychological Operations*, 6-5.

dissemination of information is not routinely conducted. Regional battalion forces are not staffed to meet the demands of strategic coordination and liaison.

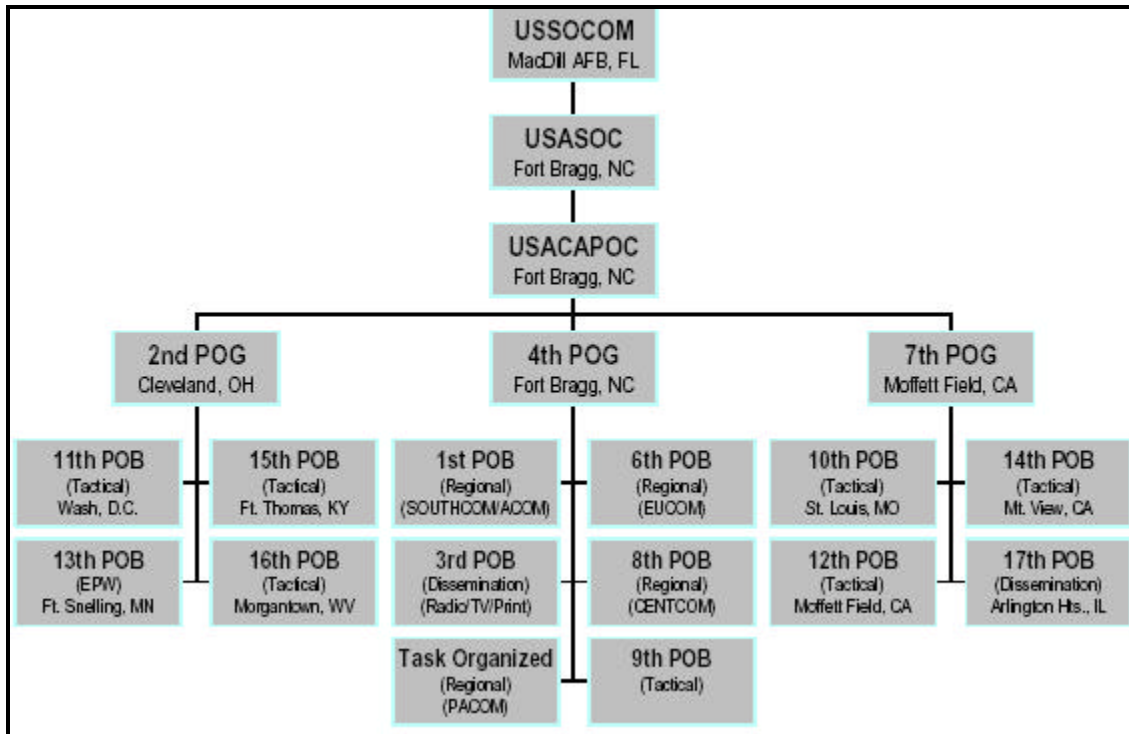


Figure 3-3 Psychological Operations - Organizations, Locations and Regional focus³⁸

Each PSYOP regional battalion consists of 19 officers and 105 enlisted personnel. This organization is staffed to support the combatant commander, provide liaisons to supporting and coalition units (with augmentation from Reserve Forces PSYOP organizations). This also assumes a full complement of personnel assigned for duty. These same personnel conduct normal training, joint activities (such as JCET), participate in crisis actions, and ultimately disseminate the national message to the international audience. The forces assigned to the regional battalions are not robust enough to also provide the personnel requirements to support an ad hoc strategic PSYOP organization. (See Annex B for a listing of unclassified operations in which PSYOP

³⁸ “4th Psychological Operations Group 2002 Command Briefing,” Capabilities of Army Psychological Operations, 4th Psychological Operations Group, Ft. Bragg, NC.

forces participated in FY 02) These operations do not include demand on PSYOP forces made in support of the GWOT and its attendant demand of personnel and equipment. With the increase in the scope of the GWOT, PSYOP forces are in demand continuously in each theater and often in multiple areas in each theater. This leaves little time or opportunity to support the regional combatant commander in coordinating strategic PSYOP.

Chapter Four

The Strategic PSYOP Unit

“There are but two powers in the world, the sword and the mind. In the long run the sword is always beaten by the mind.”

Napoleon Bonaparte

Functions of the SPU

Strategic PSYOP is defined, not so much by a different process, as by a different focus and directive authority. PSYOP forces dedicated to strategic operations will take their mission direction from the Secretary of Defense, through his designated representatives, and focus their efforts toward trans-regional issues (such as terrorism, drugs, counter-proliferation, etc.) and target sets (terrorist organizations, international population groups, etc.), or supporting national objectives of long duration such as sustained international support for U.S. military presence or activities. Their activities will compliment rather than conflict with PSYOP activities at the operational and tactical levels. The SPU provides the deconfliction and coordination necessary to focus the various governmental agencies. The SPU will assist the regional combatant commander in synchronizing his regional PSYOP plans and activities with the objectives of the national leadership. Through coordination and deconfliction efforts, the SPU will magnify and focus the activities of the agencies, organizations and groups affecting national information objectives. As depicted in Fig 4-1, the SPU coordinates the disparate agencies' activities in the NCR, and

maintains a focus on supporting the global information perspective and the combatant commander. This is the primary focus of the SPU – to provide coordination of effort, deconflict PSYOP activities within and across combatant commands, and provide the national leadership with relevant and timely PSYOP expertise. These efforts will provide the national leadership and combatant commanders unity of focus and effort.

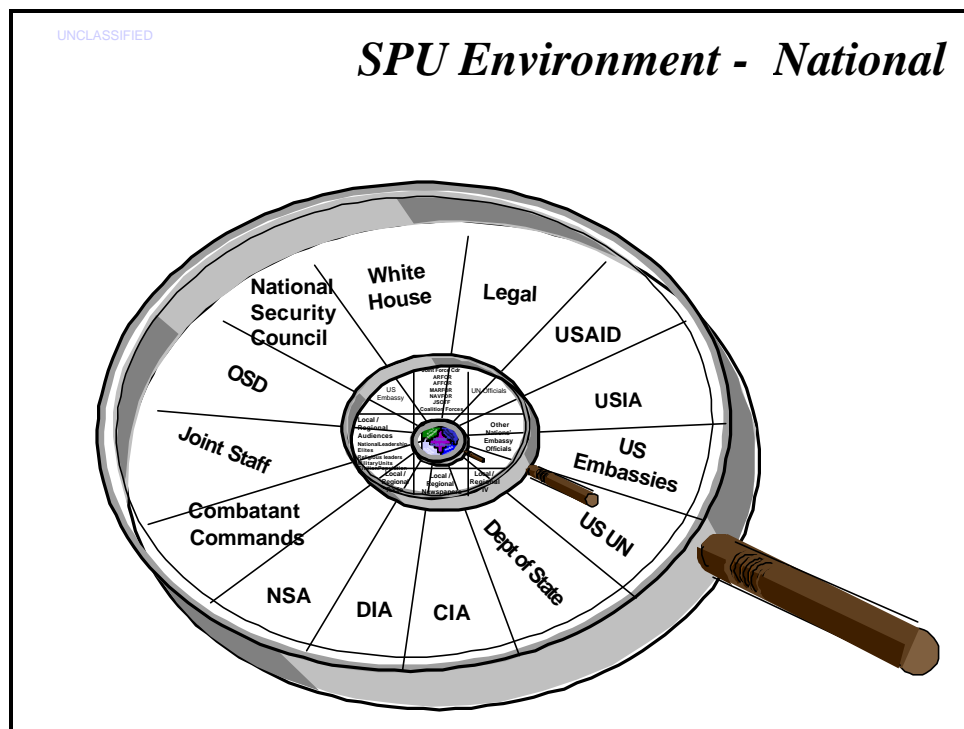


Figure 4-1 Strategic Psychological Operations focus agency efforts to create a unified PSYOP Campaign plan for national leadership³⁹

As stated in Chapter One, the current definition of strategic PSYOP contained in Joint Publication 3-53, Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations, developed in the absence of a dedicated strategic PSYOP force, addresses the need to coordinate with and support the components of the USG interagency in their international information efforts. This need remains constant with a standing strategic force in place, reinforcing the collaborative nature of strategic

³⁹ "4th Psychological Operations Group 2002 Command Briefing," Capabilities of Army Psychological Operations, 4th Psychological Operations Group, Ft. Bragg, NC.

PSYOP and IO activities. As efforts would cross regional combatant command boundaries, the strategic PSYOP force will focus on coordinating with theater staffs, Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), Service components, and dedicated operational and tactical PSYOP and IO support personnel.

Requirements for Success

To succeed, the strategic PSYOP force, acting alone or as part of a more comprehensive strategic IO force, must have capabilities which will ensure its effectiveness and gain the requisite support from government agencies.

A key component to success is access to and support from the NSC, the Secretary of Defense, their representatives, and other government agencies. This is a necessary condition, as the SPU will require clear guidance, direction, and rapid product approval. Direct access to this circle of government is also critical to ensure a clear understanding of policy, intent, message and effect desired. The SPU must be able to accomplish its tasks and missions through direct coordination with policy makers; this ensures the intended message is not lost or diluted in translation. The SPU will also require access to and support from other government agencies to collaborate on influence product planning and development.

To conduct in-depth target audience analysis and determine points of vulnerability, the SPU must have access to sufficient analytic capability. This includes access to intelligence fusion centers across DOD, the Interagency, as well as regional experts, both military and civilian. These intelligence / information sources can assist in converting national objectives into strategic, operational and tactical human target sets as well as determine psychological centers of gravity within the target audience.

To confirm the intelligence, ensure focused efforts, and determine changes in trends or perspectives, the SPU will also require access to government and commercial agencies that

conduct polling or otherwise provide information as to the current (and future) attitudes of a target set in relation to national objectives. Tracking trends and patterns from current to future attitudes constitutes the measure of effectiveness. In this manner, the SPU, as well as other PSYOP forces, can determine the effectiveness of an Information Campaign.

Neither the SPU nor the current PSYOP force has resident the necessary expertise to produce all the possible media products to influence a target audience. Technical skills in all forms of media are necessary and may be contracted for to support the development of influence campaigns which will cause a change in a target audience's position. A vivid example of this is the current Information Campaign ongoing in Bosnia. With a shortage of skilled technicians, the Information Campaign Task Force contracted for commercial companies to produce unclassified television and print ads. Expertise such as professional staff (graphic artists, journalists, internet experts, etc.) to develop prototype products for approval will also be required in the SPU.

To reach specific audiences, the SPU will need an entry into a media outlet in designated countries. Local experts in the countries of interest must be contracted to place informational products in the desired media. As these would be locals in the country of interest, relationships must be cultivated to ensure access when required. Therefore, relationship managers, similar to client services managers in civilian businesses, may be employed to ensure consistent access to the desired market areas.

The Strategic PSYOP Unit must be fully resourced to meet the needs of the national leadership, and employ tools such as target audience analysis, product development and gain media access. This includes sustained funding, personnel, equipment, training, necessary travel, and product development dollars. This also must include administrative and organizational support to operate a worldwide PSYOP effort in support of national objectives.

The need to collaborate, synchronize and deconflict PSYOP planning, product development and dissemination is a major determinant in the type of structure that a Strategic PSYOP Unit (SPU) should adopt. A key to operational success lies in the National Capitol Region (NCR), the United States' nerve center for policy, direction, guidance and approval. The NCR is the seat of national power where the majority of policy- and decision-makers create policy and decide on national goals and objectives. As stated previously, the SPU must be near enough to the national leadership to provide timely and accurate PSYOP inputs to plans, policies and decisions, where appropriate. An SPU located at the NCR facilitates easier, more personal coordination with other governmental agencies.

To fully support the divergent needs of the Regional Combatant Commanders, national leadership and interagency, the strategic PSYOP force should be modular in design, with support elements that are capable of being detached from the headquarters and move forward into the theater in support of the combatant commander while concurrently acting to implement the national strategy. The role of a command-supporting strategic PSYOP element would include assisting the supported command in planning the national strategic campaign while deconflicting and synchronizing regional strategic programs (such as the Overt Peacetime PSYOP Program, (OP3)) that support national objectives. The SPU detachment would focus on the strategic aspect of the PSYOP plan, while allowing the regional PSYOP battalion to focus on operational and tactical planning efforts

Level of Effort

The SPU would focus its effort to provide strategic PSYOP support to the decisively engaged regional combatant commander (i.e., CENTCOM in the current GWOT). A robust SPU could support each combatant commander regardless of world events. Figure 42 provides a pictorial view of the level and intensity of PSYOP support required to the supported agencies

within the spectrum of conflict. The level of effort varies the closer combat operations appear. PSYOP efforts peak at the combat operations stage; however there is always some level of effort throughout the spectrum. The demand for Strategic PSYOP remains, regardless of the state of peace or conflict. While in peace, pre- or post-hostilities, the SPU will focus efforts in an effort to build relationships and influence adversaries through peacetime engagement tied closely to strategic objectives. The main point of Figure 4-2 is that short of war, military PSYOP does not lead, but rather supports governmental / interagency efforts

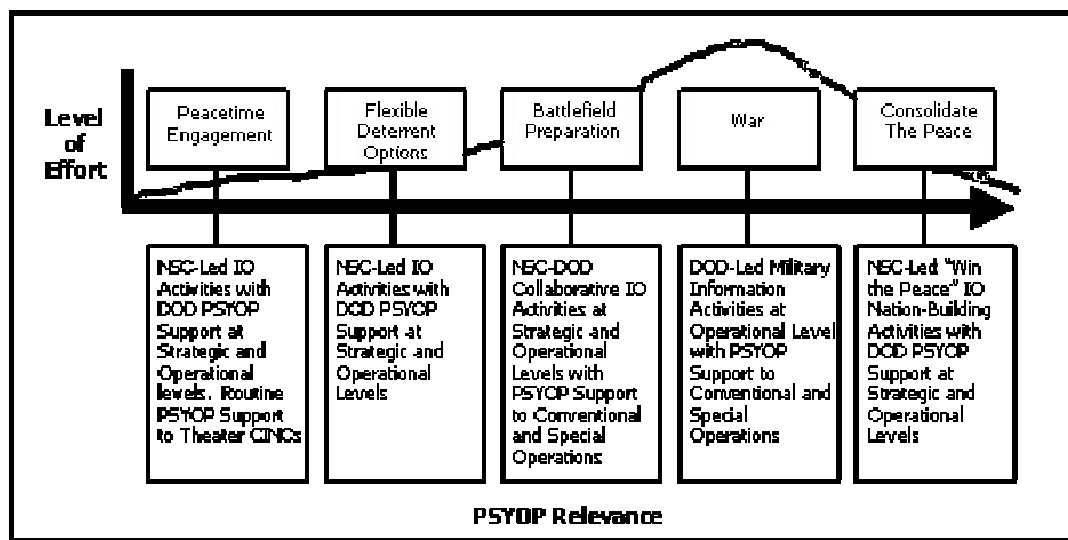


Figure 4-2 Strategic PSYOP Level of Effort and Relevance⁴⁰

The SPU would function in a coordination and advisory capacity, providing the necessary linkages between the national leadership, interagency and the regional combatant commander. Support to the regional combatant commander would focus on linking his operational and theater objectives with those of the national leadership. The SPU would also contribute to theater planning by providing coordination and integration of strategic policy with the commander's stated course of action. A study conducted by the Joint Staff J39 (DDIO – PSYOP) found "Each

⁴⁰Defense Science Board Study, 20.

of the supported CINCs cited inadequate [PSYOP] force commitment to theater as a root cause of many deficiencies and problems during their evaluation of PSYOP support war scenarios."⁴¹

The Strategic PSYOP Unit would provide the regional combatant commanders relief from what they perceive as inadequate support for PSYOP planning. The SPU would assume responsibility for coordinating strategic messages worldwide and provide guidance and recommendations to the theater and the regional PSYOP battalions to incorporate the strategic PSYOP plan.

Strategic Shortfalls

The current PSYOP organization does not maintain the capability to support Psychological Operations at all levels of war. At present, PSYOP forces remain tactically focused, and are best prepared and equipped to support the combatant commander in an operational or tactical role. Weaknesses exposed in U.S. military PSYOP response to events in both Bosnia and Kosovo have awakened many to the need to make significant changes. The vast majority of U.S. military PSYOP forces reside in the U.S. Army. This rather small group has a Cold War-oriented structure, often-antiquated equipment, and limited financial support. Yet, it is inundated with requests for support from the geographic combatant commanders to get information to foreign target audiences -- audiences that are being served by an ever-expanding array of information dissemination options. During periods of conflict, military PSYOP capabilities, particularly at the operational/tactical level (Army Corps equivalent and below), are more developed and effective. Military PSYOP doctrine and organizational structure are primarily configured to respond during a conflict. During warfighting, PSYOP elements are flexible and can provide tactical-level support with a small team or operational-level support with

⁴¹Department of Defense, *Joint PSYOP Enhancement Study*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998) pg. 2-2 - 2-12

a robust Joint PSYOP Task Force (JPOTF), potentially consisting of hundreds of individuals. Given enough time during a crisis, PSYOP forces can provide surge capability from bases in the United States to the theater commander's headquarters, supplementing existing PSYOP planning capabilities and/or establishing PSYOP headquarters for multiple Joint Task Forces at the operational strategic level of war.⁴²

Regional POB vs. Strategic PSYOP Unit		
	Regional Battalion	Strategic Unit
Operates	Tactical/Operational level	Strategic level
Supports	Cdr in JOA/AOR	President and SECDEF/DOS/OGAs
Focus	Crisis/Conflict	Deterrence, Set Conditions, Support and Stability
Dissemination	PSYOP/DOD Systems Local Foreign Media	Foreign media, satellite, and leveraged commercial network
Planning And Coordination	JTF OPLAN Combatant Commander TSC Plans	Strategic PSYOP Plan, support to President and SECDEF on National Objectives

Figure 4-3 Comparison of Regional PSYOP Battalion to Strategic PSYOP Unit⁴³

Figure 4-3 compares the capabilities and requirements of a regional PSYOP Battalion against the capabilities and requirements of a Strategic PSYOP Unit. The regional battalion's

⁴²Defense Science Board Study, 16, 20

⁴³United States Special Operations Command, "*Strategic PSYOP Unit Capabilities*" (presented at the annual World Wide PSYOP Conference, Raleigh-Durham, NC, 19 - 22 November, 2002), USSOCOM, SOIO.

focus is on operational and tactical level PSYOP; their organization and Army-centric structure does not lend itself to operating at a strategic level. As currently structured, the regional battalion is limited in scope, equipment and organization and can conduct only limited strategic PSYOP.

The requirement, however still remains – to support the national leadership with a strategic PSYOP capability to ensure unity of message, operation and purpose in the information realm. As the current organization, manpower and structure is insufficient to meet this requirement, a new structure, or organization must be created, approved and resourced to meet the need. This organization must be flexible enough to provide Strategic PSYOP support to the combatant commanders and allow the regional PSYOP battalions to focus on the operational and tactical missions.

Chapter Five

Proposed Strategic Psychological Operations Unit (SPU) Organization

“This Task Force found military PSYOP capabilities during periods of peace and crisis to be especially wanting. Traditionally focused on tactical military support, PSYOP forces are particularly challenged to provide support at the strategic level. To retain relevancy and raise effectiveness, military PSYOP forces must augment their current strategic capabilities.”

Defense Science Board Study, May 2000

SPU Proposed Mission and Purpose

A Strategic PSYOP Unit is a unique organization that links other, disparate organizations. The SPU crosses the barriers between civilian, government and military organizations. It must also act as a planning agency in support of regional combatant commanders. The SPU must provide a flexible, responsive organization to the national leadership and combatant commanders. A proposed mission statement for the SPU is offered: The Strategic PSYOP Unit (SPU) must be capable of planning, leveraging, and coordinating effective strategic information activities,

ranging from precision information engagement to foreign media operations, across the full spectrum of conflict, and at all levels of operation.

The purpose of the Strategic PSYOP Unit is to deconflict information programs and plans at the Interagency and Combatant Command levels. The SPU conducts activities that support global requirements and is directly responsive to the Office of Secretary of Defense and interagency requirements. It will also conduct planning that concentrates on trans-regional and long-term programs. The SPU will not coordinate or direct interagency activities, preempt operational and tactical PSYOP efforts of Combatant Commanders, nor report directly to the Office of Secretary of Defense.

The Strategic PSYOP Unit is an organization that must be fully integrated into the decision-making process at the national level. As the U.S. conducts its global war on terror, the SPU will be decisive in obtaining the support for a unified national message and information activities which will meet the stated requirements of the draft National Security Strategy: The SPU will aid in winning the war on terrorism, enhance joint war fighting capability, and transform the force.⁴⁴

Required Organizational Structure

Numerous recommendations have been proposed as to the composition of a Strategic PSYOP Unit. Studies within USSOCOM, outside agencies and free thinkers within the PSYOP community have proposed organizational structure changes to support the national leadership, interagency groups, regional combatant commanders and supporting PSYOP units. Strategic PSYOP must be able to operate as depicted in Figure 5-1. Such a strategic organization must be able to support, coordinate and plan Psychological Operations with these agencies, through a variety of political strata, and the entire spectrum of operations. It must be flexible enough to

⁴⁴National Military Strategy, i

support the regional combatant commanders, robust enough to concurrently coordinate, plan and conduct liaison with the myriad of national agencies, and possess the skills and finesse to operate in a highly charged political atmosphere of information dissemination.

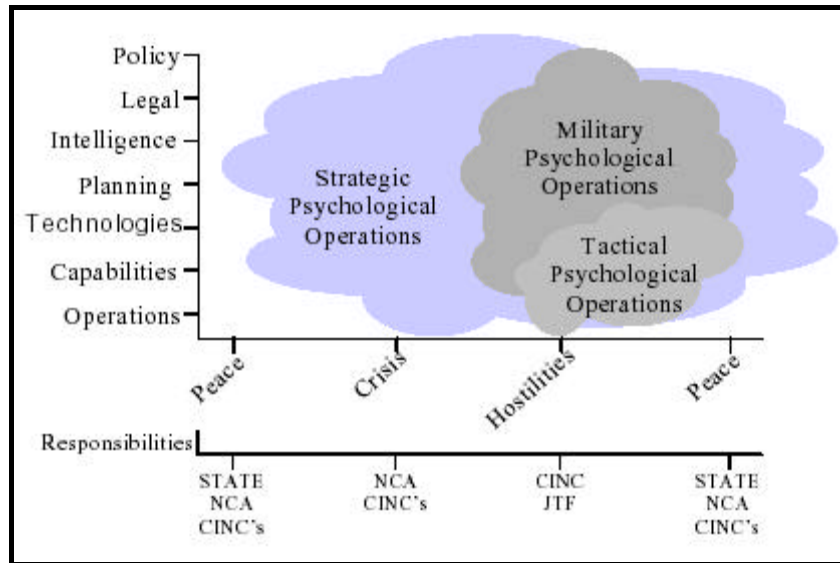


Figure 5-1 PSYOP integration through all phases of conflict⁴⁵

The purpose of the SPU as described here will assume the definition and purpose as described by the Defense Science Board Study:

Strategic PSYOP: A permanent PSYOP staff organization under the direction of ASD SO/LIC, will work closely with U.S. Department of State Public Diplomacy staff members. Their primary purpose, in accordance with Presidential Decision Directive 68, will be to assist the Department of State in developing strategic International Public information plans and programs. Additionally, this strategic PSYOP planning staff will also be able to deconflict and synchronize the Theater combatant commander's PSYOP scheme with the strategic International Public Information plan. The link between the strategic PSYOP planning staff and the theaters will occur through the Joint PSYOP Headquarters. For the first time, this headquarters will bring all the military PSYOP assets under one organization.⁴⁶

This “one organization” as described by the Defense Study is the operational heart of the SPU. Properly constituted and resourced, the SPU will be a national asset capable of conducting

⁴⁵Defense Science Board Study, 9

⁴⁶Ibid

strategic PSYOP planning and integration of the national leadership and interagency information campaigns. It will also be sufficiently robust to support the theater combatant commanders and assist in deconflicting the commanders' plans within their respective theater.

Creating a strategic PSYOP force poses unique challenges. To operate effectively in the strategic realm requires a depth of experience, training, and intellectual maturity generally associated with higher rank structure. This organization's design will require an exception to policy regarding standards of grade. It will also require a large civilian component in order to engage the highly experienced and uniquely qualified professionals (analysts, media experts and technicians) whose skill sets are not currently available in the military force. Over the long term, trained, qualified personnel from all Services will enter the strategic force to augment or replace civilian expertise. In the near-term, the forces must develop incrementally, using existing force structure as a base from which to expand. Employing a small nucleus of current PSYOP experts, the Strategic PSYOP Force provides support to the national leadership until the needed expansion takes place. This would allow for simultaneous doctrine development, joint training, joint experimentation, and joint force design to take place while a smaller, modular force of experienced personnel commence operations at the direction of the Secretary of Defense, and in collaboration with the U.S. government's interagency.

The Strategic PSYOP Unit – The Basic Organization

This provisional force was drawn from an organizational concept developed in FY 00 and

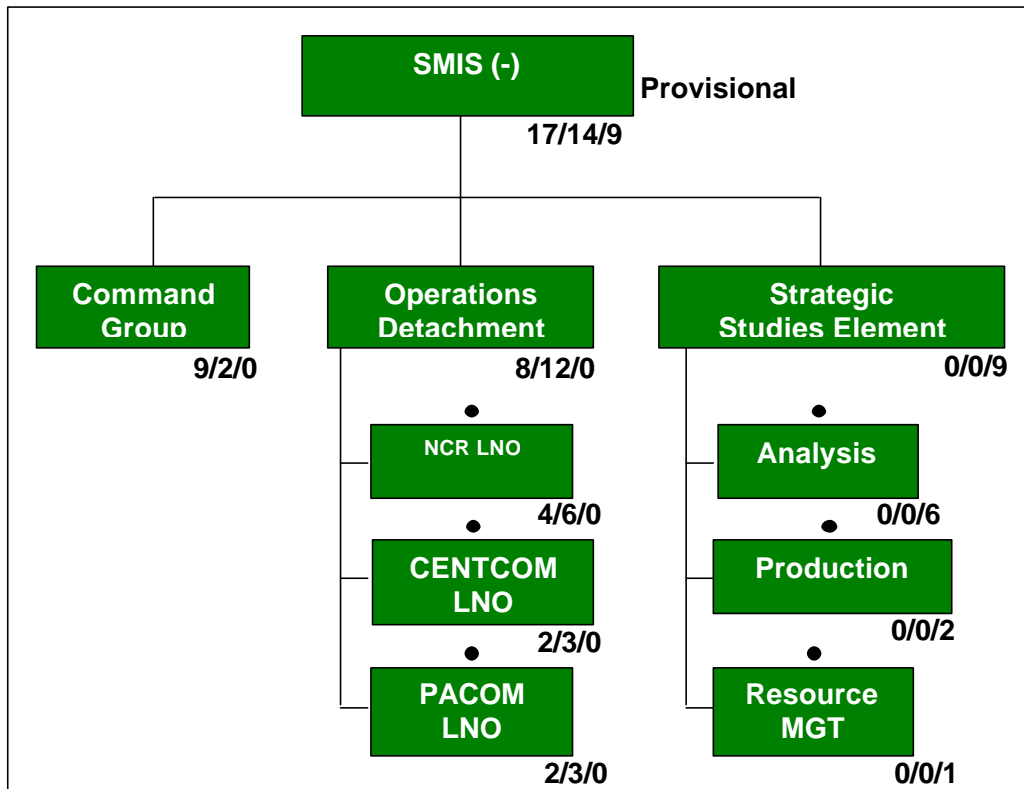


Figure 5-2: Base Strategic PSYOP Unit

was initially intended as an Army-centric addition to the Army PSYOP force at Fort Bragg, NC; it was initially slated as the Strategic Military Information Squadron (SMIS).⁴⁷ This organization, however, being Army-centric, does not fully realize the advantages of a joint organization. However, as current military PSYOP expertise rests largely in the Army, an organization as proposed above appears to be a logical start to implement a joint strategic force. The proposed structure of this provisional force is represented in Figure 5-2.

⁴⁷ “*PSYOP into the 21st Century*,” presentation on innovations within the PSYOP Force, United States Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, NC, August 2000.

This provisional force addresses the issue of civilian augmentation with the addition of civilian analytic, technical and resource management support. Some liaison support for planning and coordination is provided to the national capitol region and to the combatant commands in U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) and U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM). This capability will enable the provisional force to receive taskings from the Secretary of Defense. It could then “reach back” to Fort Bragg for analytical and production support and coordinate the strategic effort in two of the existing four combatant commands. Support for other commands would be added as personnel and resources became available.

The advantages for a structure such as this provide for a rapid implementation of a strategic PSYOP force. These advantages include: a relatively low cost capability to join together the national leadership and interagency groups, Army PSYOP forces stationed at Fort Bragg, and two of the four combatant commands for planning and limited product development purposes. Military personnel from current Army PSYOP structure can be made available to fill requirements, with civilian requirements met within a short period.

Deficiencies with this proposed structure include a lack of on-site analytical and production support, having to “reach back” to Fort Bragg (4th PSYOP Group) thereby slowing responsiveness. This organization lacks joint Service participation; it is comprised of entirely Army personnel. This leaves the organization vulnerable to “Army group think,” i.e., focus on tactical or operational concerns. Staffing the organization on a long-term basis will exceed the capability of the PSYOP force. With tactical, operational, staff and training requirements, the PSYOP force is strapped to meet Army requirements. Once the SPU is operational, the PSYOP force will require augmentation not only from the Reserve Forces, but also from the Services. Finally, the limited rank structure is inconsistent with mission success, unless the organization is created outside existing Army PSYOP structure constraints. While not an ideal Strategic PSYOP

Unit, this organization is a transitional base on which to build a strategic PSYOP capability. A future organization must be created to employ the Joint capabilities.

Strategic PSYOP Unit – The Optimal Organization

A joint organization is required to fully realize the potential in a Strategic PSYOP Unit. The SPU must seize on the technology, knowledge and experiences each of the Services offer. To fully employ these disparate assets, an entirely new organizational structure must be created which fully employs the Services' unique capabilities. As such, the optimal solution demands an entirely new organizational design. In this design, the objective (future) strategic PSYOP force is structured to provide forward-deployed support to the four regional combatant commands, Secretary of Defense and Strategic Command (STRATCOM), with its headquarters in the NCR. The proposed organization is depicted in Figure 5-3.⁴⁸ Self-contained, with combatant command (and STRATCOM) support teams, liaisons for other government agencies, the Joint SPU can effectively support the combatant commanders and the national leadership. This force would be modular with joint representation, and would include the requisite analytic and creative civilian expertise. This organization provides the in-depth analysis by Strategic Studies Detachment (SSD) personnel and for quality production of prototype products as events and PSYOP operations dictates.

⁴⁸Joint Strategic Psychological Operations Unit organizational structure originally developed at USSOCOM, SOIO–W, Jul 2002.

The joint strategic force option provides a robust organization that has presence in each of the regional combatant commands, thereby tying in strategic PSYOP messages with every regional commander's engagement programs. This would ensure constancy of message, unity of

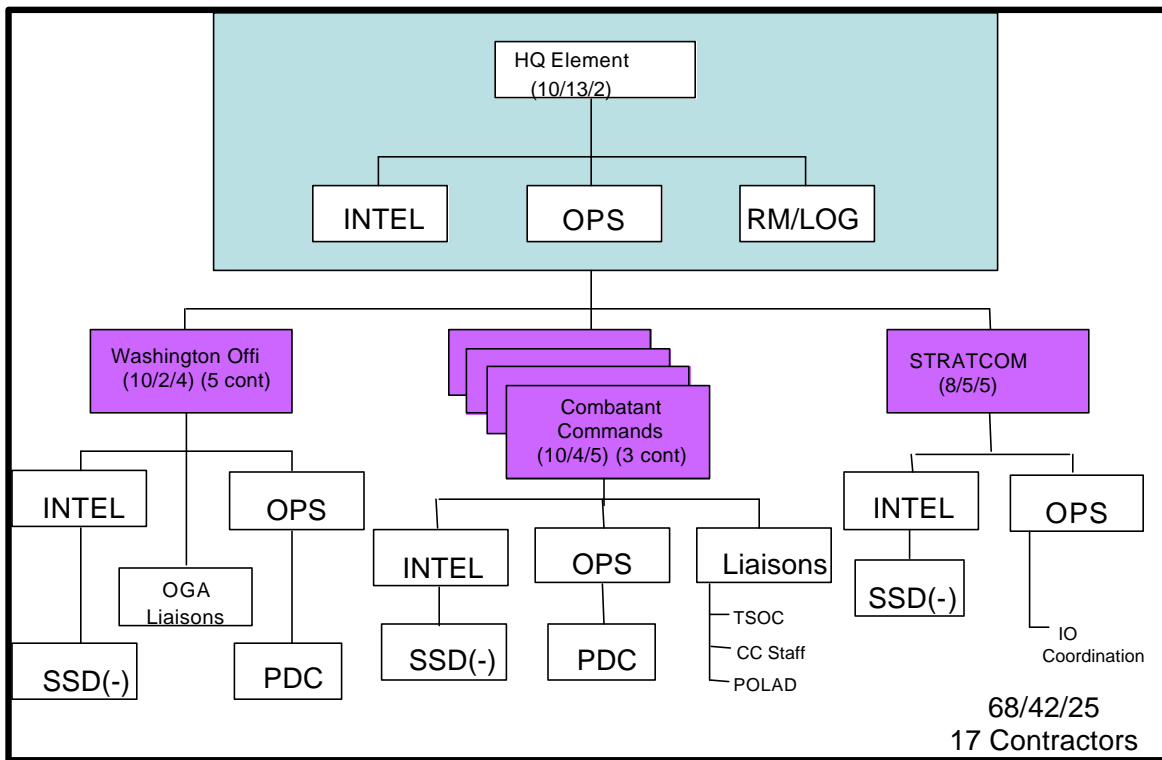


Figure 5-3 Joint Strategic Psychological Operations Unit⁴⁹

PSYOP effort and ensure that U.S. foreign policy was fully implemented by the military and informational elements of national power. Basing the Joint SPU's headquarters in the National Capital Region ensures that the necessary deconfliction and coordination is done within the interagency and national leadership. PSYOP forces would provide input on foreign audience analysis, targeting recommendations and overall provide the necessary "marketing" input to a national strategic informational plan. Conducting operations to support other IO efforts, PSYOP would be in position to provide input with its knowledge of target audiences, dissemination

⁴⁹Ibid

options and techniques. This organization would be best suited to the role demanded of PSYOP in a strategic capacity – coordination, deconfliction and a source of expert knowledge to those national agencies requiring this support.

The advantages to this organization are many. The joint SPU provides an embedded analytic and production capability to support the national leadership, interagency, four combatant commands and STRATCOM. This capability is deployed to the combatant commanders to ensure that activities conducted around the globe are synchronized with other combatant commands and national priorities. The Joint SPU will benefit from participation from the Services; each participates with their own unique skills and knowledge base. The forward positioning of this organization, tied with an increased grade structure provides an enhanced ability to interface and influence theater decision makers. The organization, both in the National Capital Region and within the combatant commands, will have a core around which to support a strategic IO capability.

The disadvantages seen in this organization are fewer, however, require long lead times to surmount. First, as this will be a joint organization, the requisite PSYOP skills will need to be built within the other Services. This requires substantial time to educate and train Service PSYOP personnel to coordinate and effectively deconflict Strategic PSYOP. Until sufficient Service PSYOP personnel are trained, Army PSYOP will support such an organization. As in the first proposed organization, this will severely stress Army PSYOP forces. Second, Strategic PSYOP forces stationed throughout the combatant commands will increase costs and require regional combatant commanders to realign staff structure to preclude going over established personnel force caps in each theater. With the increased education, training requirements and stationing costs, this is the most expensive option to establish and maintain. Finally, and most challenging

is the increased command, control, and communication challenges between combatant commands, the Joint SPU, USSOCOM and Services.

The Joint SPU is the most effective organization to provide the required support to the national leadership, interagency and combatant commanders. This organization has the built in flexibility to support the strategic requirements of the nation's leaders, the operational requirements of the regional combatant commanders and allows the regional PSYOP battalions to focus on supporting the combatant commander at the operational and tactical level. As a joint organization, it can bring together Service strengths that can be leveraged for strategic PSYOP.

Chapter Six

Recommendations and Conclusions

Strategic PSYOP – A Need Revalidated

PSYOP forces have operated at the strategic level throughout American history. During the 20th Century alone, PSYOP on a strategic scale achieved a pinnacle and a nadir in employment. During World War II in both the European and Pacific Theaters of Operation, PSYOP was a main participant and integrator of government agencies (both U.S. and Allied), military organizations and civilian operations. The Korean Conflict saw the establishment of the Office of Psychological Warfare in Washington, D.C., and the Psychological Warfare Center in Fort Bragg, N.C. President Truman established a Psychological Strategy Board to integrate and fully exploit the capabilities of PSYOP on a national scale. The Vietnam War saw PSYOP lose its primacy in the strategic arena; PSYOP concentrated on tactical and operational PSYOP in direct support to the ground commander. Vietnam remained the paradigm PSYOP followed throughout the 1970's and 1980's; the focus and capabilities of PSYOP drifted downward from national strategic PSYOP support to tactical and operational actions. This was not reversed until the

publication of the 1990 PSYOP Master Plan, in which PSYOP forces were given new priorities and the recommendation for a Joint Psychological Operations Center became a reality. The Gulf War provided PSYOP a boost in fame in both the tactical / operational arena and a lesser claim to fame in the strategic one. With the results achieved conducting tactical and operational PSYOP, field commanders came to realize the impact and import this capability brought to any conflict. PSYOP was less successful in strategic PSYOP, being held to smaller gains in this arena.

Organized to meet a new Threat

The National Military Strategy (NMS) has provided the potential battlefield for the SPU and other military and U.S. government agencies. The NMS states:

Today, the U.S. confronts a dangerous and uncertain security environment with a variety of potential adversaries, including regional powers with significant military forces, state sponsors of terrorism, non-state transnational entities such as terrorist groups, illegal armed groups, international criminal organizations, and hostile coalitions of these actors.⁵⁰

This battlefield has been developing since the end of the Cold War. An increased requirement for strategic PSYOP became acute since 1991; the United States became involved in peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations. This included operations in Bosnia – Herzegovina (1995 – present) and Kosovo (1999 – present). However, the events of September 11, 2001 introduced a new form of the battlefield, which has led to the urgency for strategic PSYOP to coordinate and deconflict themes, messages and activities. This new threat, transnational and with few ties to any established government, forced an immediate review of how the U.S. government was conducting not only combat operations, but also and to a near equal degree, Information and Psychological Operations. The result is the stated and actual requirement to coordinate PSYOP at the strategic level.

⁵⁰The National Military Strategy, ii

Based on the examination of the current PSYOP organization and the ever-growing demand for tactical and operational PSYOP forces, a new strategic PSYOP organization is needed to coordinate strategic PSYOP. This organization must be joint, robust and modular to support the national leadership and the combatant commanders in coordinating strategic PSYOP. The Strategic PSYOP Unit must be able to link the stated policy and messages from the national authorities to the regional combatant commanders' peacetime and wartime PSYOP plans and programs. This organization must be joint in nature in order to unify and employ the disparate capabilities inherent within each of the Services. The strategic PSYOP Unit must be able to meet the needs of the national leadership today and into the future with an organization which can provide them as well as the combatant commanders the tools and coordination necessary to win the Global War on Terror, but also any other operations, conflicts or peacetime activities which require PSYOP actions.

Recommendation – A Joint Strategic PSYOP Organization

There is a need and valid requirement for a strategic PSYOP Unit. The optimal organization is the Joint Strategic PSYOP unit described in Chapter 5. It provides the national leadership the support it requires, it is flexible and modular to support the combatant commanders and is developed as a joint organization. This organization will be an exemplar for true joint war fighting, employing military capabilities from all services to assist the national leadership and the interagency in executing informational objectives.

Appendix A –Psychological Strategy Board, 1951

[Public Papers of the Presidents](#) • [Harry S. Truman](#) • [1951](#)

128 Directive Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board.

June 20, 1951

Directive to: The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Director of Central Intelligence:

It is the purpose of this directive to authorize and provide for the more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations.

There is hereby established a Psychological Strategy Board responsible, within the purposes and terms of this directive, for the formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort.

The Board will report to the National Security Council on the Board's activities and on its evaluation of the national psychological operations, including implementation of approved objectives, policies, and programs by the departments and agencies concerned.

The Board shall be composed of:

a. The Undersecretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence, or, in their absence, their appropriate designees;

b. An appropriate representative of the head of each such other department or agency of the Government as may, from time to time, be determined by the Board.

The Board shall designate one of its members as Chairman.

A representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall sit with the Board as its principal military adviser in order that the Board may ensure that its objectives, policies and programs shall be related to approved plans for military operations.

There is established under the Board a Director who shall be designated by the President and who shall receive compensation of \$16,000 per year.

The Director, within the limits of funds and personnel made available by the Board for this purpose, shall organize and direct a staff to assist in carrying out his responsibilities. The Director shall determine the organization and qualifications of the staff, which may include individuals employed for this purpose, including part-time experts, and/or individuals detailed from the participating departments and agencies for assignment to full-time duty or on an ad hoc task force basis. Personnel detailed for assignment to duty under the terms of this directive shall be under the control of the Director, subject only to necessary personnel procedures within their respective departments and agencies.

The participating departments and agencies shall afford to the Director and the staff such assistance and access to information as may be specifically requested by the Director in carrying out his assigned duties.

The heads of the departments and agencies concerned shall examine into present arrangements within their departments and agencies for the conduct, direction and coordination of psychological operations with a view toward readjusting or strengthening them if necessary to carry out the purposes of this directive.

In performing its functions, the board shall utilize to the maximum extent the facilities and resources of the participating departments and agencies.
HARRY S. TRUMAN

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Appendix B - PSYOP Exercise Participation FY 2002

Mine Awareness

InterAmerican Defense Board
(IADB) MINE AWARENESS

Humanitarian Demining Operations
(HDO) SOUTHAM (Argentina),
(Peru)
HDO CENTAM (Nicaragua)

Counter Drug (CD) Programs

Crop eradication
Alternative crop development
Institution building
Interdiction
Demand reduction

CD Peru
CD Colombia
CD Guatemala
CD Bolivia
CD Ecuador
CD Venezuela
CD Bahamas
CD Dominican Republic
CD El Salvador

FY 02 Exercises

FUERTES DEFENSAS

BLUE ADVANCE (Puerto Rico)
FA CABANAS (Chile)
TRADEWINDS (Antigua)
NEW HORIZONS (Peru)
PKO NORTHM (El Salvador)
TCA SEMINAR (Paraguay)

African Crisis Response Initiative

(ACRI) SENEGAL
LION FOCUS

Joint Combined Exchange Training

JCET
Czech Rep, Germany, Hungary,
Romania, UK
VICTORY FOCUS
ARCADE GUARD
STRONG RESOLVE
DYNAMIC MIX
MAGYAR RESPONSE
NOBLE PIPER (Kenya)
LUCKY SENTINEL (Kuwait)
NATURAL FIRE (Kenya)
INTERNAL LOOK (Jordan)
BRIGHT STAR (Egypt)
KEEN EDGE (Japan)
RSO&I (Korea)
TEMPEST EXPRESS 02-1, 02-2
(Japan)
COBRA GOLD (Thailand)
BALANCE PISTON (Philippines)
BALANCE KNIFE (Korea)
BALANCE STYLE (Sri Lanka)
ULCHI FOCUS LENS (Korea)
BALANCE TORCH (Thailand)

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